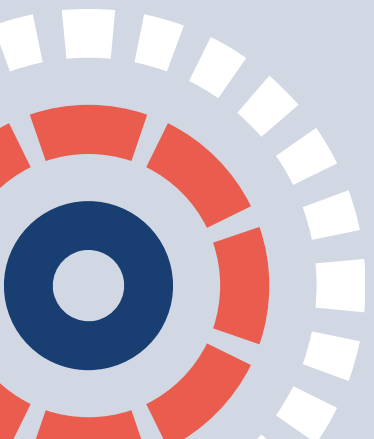


# Evaluating a Whole Systems Approach to Child Healthy Weight in Dundee

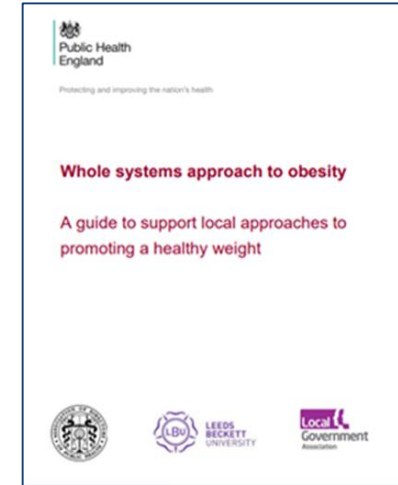


Dr. Peter van der Graaf, PHIRST Fusion/ Northumbria University  
Dr. Jenny Gillespie, PHIRST Fusion/ NHS Tayside

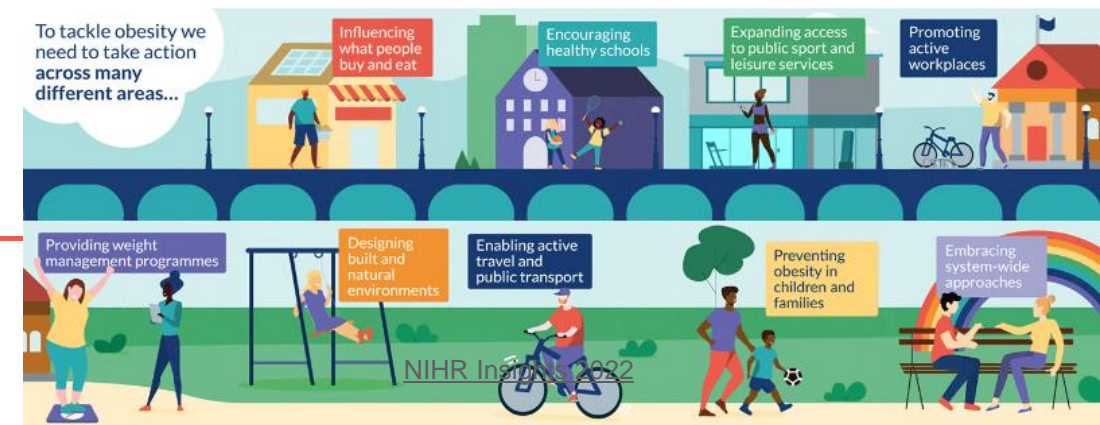


# Developing a Whole Systems Approach to Child Healthy Weight in Tayside

- Dundee - Scottish Government 'Early Adopter' site of a Whole Systems Approach (WSA) to Diet & Healthy Weight
- Local Child Healthy Weight Strategy was published in early 2020, with 5 key ambitions
- Jan 2020 – Sept 2021: Stakeholder workshops to map the system, identify priorities, actions and set up working groups
- Jan 2021: successful application to NIHR PHIRST for evaluation, <https://phirst.nihr.ac.uk/about-phirst/phirst-fusion/>
- Jan – May 2021 - Evaluability Assessment Workshops to develop evaluation protocol



PHE WSA to Obesity Guide 2019



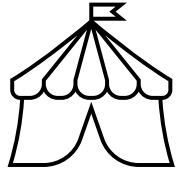
# Evaluation of 'Healthy Weight Tayside' (HWT): a whole system approach to child healthy weight in Dundee City

**RQ:** *Does the approach in Dundee support key stakeholders to recognise what they can do in relation to actions at different levels within the system?*

- **WP1:** Semi-structured **interviews** (n=9) with DHWPs members and senior leaders, framed by Jenkins et al. (2020)
- **WP2:** Members and leaders trained as **peer researchers** (n=9) to interview their wider networks about role perceptions in HWT (n=13)
- **WP3: Survey** among wider group of stakeholders to sense-check and finetune findings (n=27), modelled on *Stakeholder-driven Community Diffusion Survey for childhood obesity prevention* (Korn et al., 2021)
- **WP4: Action learning sets** (n=2) with key stakeholders across Tayside to agree recommendations for applying HWT to other local authorities



# Theme 1 – Significant Events of the WSA Process



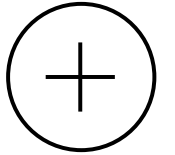
- Agenda is taking shape with partners from **different sectors** and **diverse experience** taking up **joint responsibility**

*“...this approach by Dundee, with many partners, from different streams attending the events organised showed its success...”*

- Roles are **well-defined and mapped** to the activities that network members were already performing

*“And we put together, what our role was within that group at the time was to look at all that and try to put it all together in a sort of driver diagram”*

## Theme 2 – Positive Factors impacting the WSA Process



- **Commitment and teamwork** to club together and create more impact (shout out schools!)

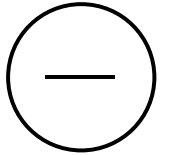
*“...the level of commitment and the number of people who get into this makes a difference...”*

*“it is ensured through the team work, that you’re part of the whole system...”*

- **Sharing knowledge** for effective implementation and positive impact on the process

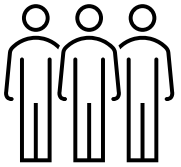
*“For me, it is sharing the skills to work with partners, and sharing the knowledge, and providing feedback, that’s making it work well”*

# Theme 3 – Negative Factors impacting the WSA Process



- **Different priorities** between teams and councils slowing down progress  
*“There are other pressing issues for all the groups involved, and WSA isn't a priority at the moment”*
- **Limited funding** to invest in activities and facilities  
*“If you're going to cut costs cut them elsewhere please. This is very important at the moment”*
- Lack of opportunities for **community involvement** and **parents/ carers engagement**  
*“Local people really being involved in maybe creating some kind of health promoting activities in the area for themselves and their children, but I don't see anything happening.”*

# Theme 4 – Reasons for involvement in the WSA to CHW - process



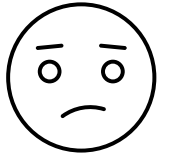
- **Passion, personal interest and making a difference to communities** (and part of work remit)

*“I care passionately about that, in terms of the future health of Scotland’s next generation and the generations to follow.”*

*“I have kids who go to primary school, and that drives me to create some change”*

*“...make sure that all the activities, have an impact that enables the community to develop in a positive manner...”*

# Theme 5 – Areas of concern in developing the WSA to CHW Process



- Concerns about **scaling up** and **sustainability**: map and link activities across Tayside  
*“the three councils of Tayside must collaborate and do the same thing as each other at the same time as each other, and must work tightly together, to get a nationwide approach”*
- **Uncertainty about next steps**: ongoing communication and involvement (time for action)  
*“We are fine till now, but what will happen next, who tells us that?”*  
*“So my concern would be that all the information they’ve gathered just sits there but nothing actually happens”*
- Lack of **visibility at community level**: local people are not aware of the WSA and activities taking place  
*“They’ve no awareness of anything that’s been tackled in relation to child healthy weight at all, and I don’t think if I asked local people they would either”*



# Summary of findings



- WSA to CHW is **taking shape** (people, knowledge, responsibilities, roles)
- Stakeholders are **passionate** with **commitment to make difference** to communities
- **High levels of interest, lower levels of engagement** in priority themes
- **Working in silos** and **missed opportunities** for joined up working
- **Lack of awareness about existing structures** and **knowledge about strategies** to prevent unhealthy child weight
- Strategies not always well **aligned between key organisations** and **senior leaders not working together**
- **Insufficient resources** for sustaining and scaling up (staff, time and funding)
- **Lack of visibility** and **opportunities for communities & parents to engage**

## TOP 5 PRIORITIES identified by Dundee Healthy Weight Partnership

1. Improve **messaging** around CHW /  
Using data to tell a story
2. Development of a **Community  
Engagement Plan** with community partners
3. **Alignment** of strategies and agendas
4. **Visibility** – celebrate the small wins
5. **Solution Focused Approach** to  
addressing resource issue (at all levels)

## TOP 5 PRIORITIES identified by Tayside Regional Improvement Collaborative

1. Focus resources on **Early Intervention and  
Assessment Planning (EIAP)**
2. Promote **collective responsibility** for CHW
3. **Coproduction of resources**/ smarter  
resource sharing/ 3 tier mode – universal,  
targeted, specialist
4. **Visibility** – Create a brand / recognizable /  
logo / tagline
5. **Stickability** – At senior level leadership  
across the three areas

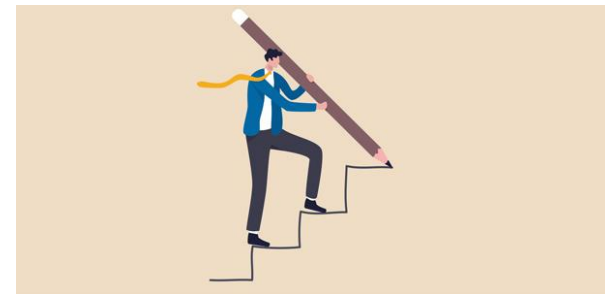




# Extending current knowledge base on WSA to CHW

- Findings **echo Bagnall et al. systematic review** (2019), which identified 10 facilitators for WSA.
  - Capacity (4<sup>th</sup> facilitator): knowledge about strategies to prevent unhealthy child weight as additional dimension
  - Trusting relationships (2<sup>nd</sup> facilitator) are not enough; **understanding of wider structures** crucial for building capacity and maintain engagement
  - Consistency in language used across organisations important (7<sup>th</sup> facilitator), but ongoing need for **targeted communication and diverse involvement** opportunities
1. Strong leadership and full engagement of all partners
  2. Time to build relationships, trust and community
  3. Engaging the local community
  4. Capacity
  5. Good governance and shared values
  6. Appropriate partnerships to create sustainable multilevel environmental change
  7. Consistency in language used across organisations
  8. Embedding initiatives within a broader policy context
  9. Local evaluations
  10. Sufficient financial support and resources (Bagnall et al.,2019)

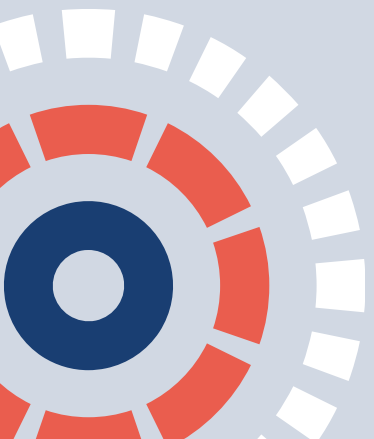
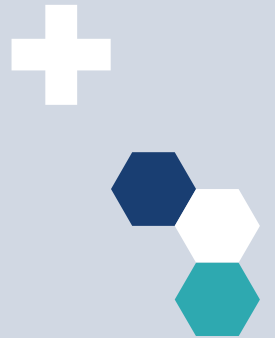
## Next steps



- Follow-up action learning sets by Dundee Healthy Weight Partnership to further develop action plans
- Meeting with colleagues in Angus Council (incl. Deputy Chief Executive) about local adaption and alignment with Dundee approach
- Additional Ripple Effect Mapping workshops in Dundee and Angus to continue mapping impact of WSA to CHW
- Writing joint papers for academic journals (in progress)
- Develop film to disseminate findings to community members (in planning)
- Follow-up conversation in 3-6 months' time to see how research findings have been taken forward and how PHIRST Fusion can support this

Thank you!

Any questions?



# Research team

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- With thanks to Dr William Cook, NHS Tayside, Audrey White, Dundee City Council, Emily Lowrie, Olivia Wood and Cara Spunk, Abertay University Dundee